

YOUR ENERGY & CLIMATE ACTION PATHWAY

BE PART OF THE SOLUTION!

Climate change is a global phenomenon but you can act locally to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and foster sustainability and resiliency in your community. You have the power to create an impact, inspire others toward action, and contribute to a just transition to a clean energy future.

Follow these steps to create lasting positive change in your school or community.

1 IDENTIFY THE PROBLEM

What are the **needs** of your school or community, and how can you act to address those needs? Where is there an **opportunity** for your leadership to make an impact? What **specific problem** would you hope to address?

2 EXPLORATION

Identify the **causes** and explore the **history** of the problem through research and conversation. What information is available to you via the internet or at your local library? Who in your community could share valuable **insight, data, and varying perspectives** about the problem? Who are the stakeholders that influence or are impacted by this problem?

3 BUILDING A TEAM

Who in your community might also be interested and **able to help** address the problem with you? Who in your community has **skills or knowledge** that might be helpful during your project? Consider inviting friends, classmates, teachers, non-profits, business owners, or community leaders into your team.

7 REFLECTION

Did you address the problem you identified and achieve your goals? What **lessons did you learn** from this experience that make you a stronger leader? What would you **do differently** next time around? How could you **grow your impact** further? What's your **next project**?

ACTION SPOTLIGHT: *Coventry Village School*

Problem: How to reduce the school electricity use, without any money for upgrades.

Impact: After implementing the school wide plan to change behaviors around electricity use, the data collected showed a school-wide decrease of electricity use of 18%, compared to the same time the previous year.

Reflection: The 7th and 8th grade committees tasked with different elements of the project reported to the larger group on their tactics, the data they collected, and what worked and what didn't. To finish, the group joined hands in celebration around a long rope (in a circle) and 10' tall pole, to visualize the volume of carbon emissions that were saved from their efforts.



How much CO2 was saved by the Coventry students?
The emissions that the students prevented through behavior change could have filled a cube 60 feet square. For comparison, the Coventry Village School itself is only about 25 feet high!



ACTION SPOTLIGHT: *Youth Lobby*

Overall Project: Getting legislation passed to make a difference on Climate Change.

Building a team: The youth run organization, Youth Lobby, wanted to strengthen their voice in the Vermont State House, and so organized to do just that. They did outreach around the state to build a team, with a unified youth voice calling for climate action. To do this, they strengthened their voice and team through a Youth Climate Congress, in which almost 200 youth gathered to create a Climate Declaration, agreed upon and signed by those present. This became a tool for the Youth Lobby as they negotiated and brought a unified voice to both allies and opponents in the state house.



4 PLANNING

What are your project **goals**? Are these goals Strategic, Measurable, Ambitious, Realistic, Time-Bound, Inclusive, and Equitable? What are the **concrete steps** to be taken to address this problem? What is your **timeframe** for seeing results and what are benchmarks that you might set for the project? What **roles** do different members of your team play?



6 IMPACT

How will you know if you have met your goals? How will you collect input, information, and data so as to **measure the impact** of your action? In what ways have you reduced greenhouse gas emissions and fostered sustainability in your community? How will you **share and celebrate** your impact in order to inspire others?



5 ACTION

How will you hold yourself and your team **accountable**? How do you keep the momentum going? What are the **unexpected roadblocks** that appear and how do you overcome them? Are you staying grounded in your primary objective while being flexible in your approach? Are there **opportunities for input** from various stakeholders?



A RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

Your Vision & Leadership

+ Your Team's Support & Collaboration

+ Acting With Heart & Mind & Urgency

= Sustainable Change

ACTION SPOTLIGHT: *Rutland High School*

Problem: School drop-offs/pick-up lead to traffic congestion on main road and walking students feeling unsafe. Car idling also leads to more greenhouse gases.

Planning: The team of students, VEEP staff and Local Motion met to make a plan for the changes the students wanted to see, and decided to test out their ideas first. They proposed a pilot phase to school administrators, received permission, and then tested their ideas with temporary changes (using traffic cones, temporary paint, etc.) to see what made the most impact. This thoughtful planning helped them decide on the concrete steps they would take and also helped build buy-in in the community.

